

**A Collection
of Articles,
Speeches,
and Letters
on the
War in Iraq**

*By Congressman
Marty Meehan*





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“Iraq and the War on Terror”
Excerpted from *U.S. Foreign Policy and the War on Terror*
By Congressman Marty Meehan
October, 2005

At Fort Bragg on June 28 of this year, the President told the American people that "we fight today because terrorists want to attack our country and kill our citizens, and Iraq is where they are making their stand." In reality, recent analysis has determined that 95 percent of the insurgents in Iraq are native Iraqis, not foreign fighters. But more troubling, new reports indicate that the majority of those insurgents in Iraq who are foreign fighters had not previously been involved in any form of terrorism. Rather, they had become radicalized by the war in Iraq itself.

President Bush's claim that we are "fighting the terrorists abroad so we do not have to face them at home" also does not ring true. As one terrorism expert, Peter Bergen of the nonpartisan New America Foundation, recently explained, "the President is right that Iraq is a main front in the war on terrorism, but this is a front we created... To say we must fight them in Baghdad so we don't have to fight them in Boston implies there is a finite number of people." The Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, Porter Goss, stated clearly to the Senate Intelligence Committee: "Islamic extremists are exploiting the Iraqi conflict to recruit new anti-U.S. jihadists."

These findings are a major concern. The Bush Administration's own National Intelligence Council recently released a study on terrorism which found that there is a new class of terrorists arriving from other countries and being "professionalized" in Iraq by acquiring "training grounds, technical skills, and language proficiency." For these people, "political violence becomes an end in itself." These newly recruited, newly radicalized terrorists will inevitably return to their home countries with more expertise and violent motivation than before. The task of confronting these killers will extend beyond the Middle East to places like Central Asia and the Sahel in Western Africa and will be a major challenge for years to come.

My most recent trip to the Middle East strengthened my view that Iraq remains a central component to our relations in the Muslim world. It was the primary topic of conversation with foreign officials and, in their minds, the most immediate cause for negative public perception of the United States.

Iraq is, at best, a distraction and, at worst, counterproductive to our struggle against violent extremism. The United States must continue to accelerate the training of an Iraqi government and security force capable of maintaining the rule of law independently, publicly declare our intention to have no permanent military presence in Iraq, and announce a timetable for a drawdown of a substantial number of our forces.

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“Iraq and the War on Terror”
Remarks at the U.S. Capitol
By Congressman Marty Meehan
September 27, 2005

I'm delighted to be here with all of you today for this display of bipartisan support for HJ Res 55. As the number of fatalities in Iraq continues to rise, now more than ever our country needs to unite around a solution that will bring our troops home with honor.

Last month, I participated in a ten-day fact-finding mission to the Middle East to explore our counterterrorism efforts. This most recent trip confirmed that Iraq remains a central component to our relations in the Muslim world. Our actions in Iraq were the primary topic of conversation with foreign officials and, in their minds, the most immediate cause for negative public perception of the United States.

Regrettably, we continue to see mixed messages from those in charge of the war in the White House, versus those on the ground. As the Washington Post noted earlier this week: "The commanders who are running the war don't talk about transforming Iraq into an American-style democracy or of imposing U.S. values. They understand that Iraqis dislike American occupation, and for that reason they want fewer American troops in Iraq, not more."

Iraqis want an end to the military occupation that controls their streets and so many aspects of their daily lives. And yet, word from the field has failed to translate into a substantial commitment by the Administration to lay out a timeline for bringing our brave servicemen and women home. As our military leaders know well, prolonged military occupation in Iraq will not end the insurgency, nor will it advance our interests. It will only bring more casualties.

The United States must maintain a role in moving Iraq towards self-governance, while at the same time making clear its plans to begin a withdrawal of U.S. forces. The world is watching what we do in Iraq. We serve our own best interests by honoring the expressions of independence and free will by the Iraqi people and allowing them to assume real ownership of their country.

That's what the Homeward Bound Act is all about, and I'm delighted to stand here with so many distinguished colleagues from both sides of the aisle in support of that goal.

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“A U.S. Exit Strategy in Iraq”
Op-ed in *Roll Call*

By Congressman Marty Meehan

March 9, 2005

This month marks the two year anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Iraq. During this time, Saddam Hussein has been deposed and captured and the Iraqi people liberated from the oppression of the Ba'athist regime. Unfortunately, the violence in Iraq did not cease following the conventional fighting phase of this operation. In fact, the violence in Iraq continues to increase in both frequency and intensity.

The evidence we have from our experience in Iraq points to one conclusion – our current strategy isn't working. In fact, our strategy does more to fuel the insurgency than suppress it.

The Iraqi insurgency draws its strength from its support in the civilian population in the form of arms, sanctuary, and intelligence. With 96% of the insurgents being native Iraqis, the only effective end to the insurgency is stemming its support within the population -- not attempting to kill or capture its fighters. Over the long-term, this is a battle not for military victory, but for the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people.

Every time the administration signals that our troops will be in Iraq for "as long as it takes," it confirms Iraqis' suspicions that the United States intends a permanent presence. Every time Iraqi citizens see a Bradley fighting vehicle rolling through their cities, it undermines our assertion that Iraq is sovereign. Every time Iraqi bystanders are killed in coalition actions, it further erodes the good will the United States earned by toppling Saddam's regime. The American presence has become inherently destabilizing.

The best option to change the dynamic in Iraq is to announce a timetable for a phased drawdown of US forces. The United States should lay out and stick to a schedule in which the majority of our forces leave Iraq by the end of this year and all but a much smaller contingent leave by mid-2006 -- a full two years after the transfer of sovereignty. Perhaps most important, President Bush must make clear that the United States does not seek to maintain a permanent military presence in Iraq.

Under this strategy, we would shift the American focus from engaging in combat against the insurgents to training Iraqis to do the job themselves. The only way to improve security is if the counterinsurgency is conducted by Iraqi up front and with Americans only in the background.

In Iraq today, US forces are the focal point for tensions and violence. This has unified the various elements of the insurgency -- Islamic extremists, Sunni nationalists, foreign jihadists, all of whom have little in common but opposition to the US presence. Our current strategy has removed the urgency for Iraq's ethnic and religious factions to forge the political

compromises needed for a workable balance of power. A withdrawal could be structured in a way to create incentives for various factions to come to the negotiating table instead of engaging in armed insurrection.

With all of the tragic mistakes that have been made so far, no strategy in Iraq will be without risks. The question is what strategy will give us the best chance of achieving our most basic goal -- a stable, self-sufficient Iraq that doesn't threaten its neighbors or the world.

In defying the threat of violence to go vote, the Iraqi people proved on January 30th that they're willing to risk their lives to have a stake in determining their country's future. Iraqis want to be independent -- not just on paper but in reality. I believe it's in America's best interests to give Iraqis real ownership over their country sooner rather than later.

As then-Texas Governor Bush said of the Kosovo conflict, "victory means exit strategy and it's important for the President to explain to us what the exit strategy is."

I couldn't agree more. An exit strategy -- a plan for victory -- is precisely what the United States needs in Iraq. And it has been sorely lacking.

This month, President Bush will ask Congress for another year of supplemental funding for the war in Iraq. The worst thing that Congress could do for our troops is to write a blank check without ensuring that we have a real plan to get them out of Iraq. We simply cannot continue to fund the Iraq War without accountability and without an exit strategy.

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"Iraq: The Impacts of War"
Remarks at the Joiner Center for War and Social Consequences,
University of Massachusetts -- Boston
By Congressman Marty Meehan
March 4, 2005

The impact of every war -- whether it's World War II, Korea, Vietnam, the First Gulf War or today's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan -- is felt for decades after the last shot is fired. But as a country, we don't dedicate nearly enough to understanding the impact of war on veterans, families, and communities.

I believe that's reflected in the misplaced priorities too many people have in Washington. Last month, President Bush sent Congress a new budget request. He's proposing spending billions of more dollars on defense, but cutting benefits for our nation's veterans.

It is inexcusable and indefensible that we can find trillions for tax cuts, but we can't find the money for VA health care. We're giving out signing bonuses to new enlistees because we're in such dire need for new soldiers, but we're ignoring our veterans after they've served and come home. I think it's time for us to start serving veterans the way they've served us. And so I thank you for the work you are doing here at the Joiner Center to support veterans and helping us understand war and its many consequences.

We usually measure the cost of the Iraq war in terms of lives lost and dollars spent. As of this week, 1,500 Americans have been lost in Iraq. And taxpayers have been asked to spend about \$200 billion, with another \$80 billion request now in Congress. But the impact will also be felt in the lives of the men and women who are returning from the war zone.

I regularly visit Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington. For those of you who don't know, Walter Reed is where the 19-year-old kids who have lost arms and legs in Iraq are sent for rehabilitation. When you visit there, you come to understand what war really costs. And we can never forget that for every soldier whose injury you can see, there are many more whose injuries are below the surface.

The New England Journal of Medicine recently did a survey of hundreds of soldiers and marines returning from Iraq. 89% of them said that they had been attacked or ambushed. 81% had fired shots. 95% had been shot at. 94% had seen dead bodies. 86% had known someone who was killed or seriously injured. The study found that one-in-six soldiers returning from Iraq are suffering from major depression, generalized anxiety, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Since the war began two years ago this month, more than one million American men and women have served in Iraq. It's not enough to send them off with yellow ribbons. We need to welcome them home with gratitude, support, benefits and first-class health care. To

borrow a line from Arthur Miller, the great playwright who died this year, attention must be paid. Attention must be paid to every veteran returning with physical or mental scars. I'm not convinced that enough attention is being paid.

The most troubling part of the New England Journal study could be that only one in every four veterans returning home with severe mental health problems have sought or received treatment. Under the policy the Pentagon had in place until very recently, when soldiers returned home, all they had to do was fill out a questionnaire about their health. Since most soldiers just wanted to get home, they didn't want to complicate things by checking off any more boxes than they needed to.

And of course there's a terrible stigma associated with mental health disorders. As a result, thousands of veterans suffering from PTSD may have slipped through the cracks. That's one reason why last October, I began speaking out about PTSD. Specifically, I proposed that Congress require the Department of Defense to give every soldier heading home a thorough physical and mental health examination.

The truth is that the Pentagon is only beginning to understand this issue. In January, they announced that every soldier will be screened for PTSD 3 to 6 months after they return. It's a step forward, but still not enough.

As a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, I'm going to monitor this new policy to make sure it's comprehensive and service-wide. And most importantly, we're going to fight to restore the cuts in President Bush's budget and make sure we pay for first-class health care for every one of our veterans.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I make the welfare of our troops in the field my top priority. In January, I traveled to Iraq at the request of some military families in my district to check up on our efforts there. What I found was very disappointing. What I found in Iraq is that, despite a failing policy, the Bush Administration's plan is essentially to continue along the same course with no end in sight.

This month marks two years since President Bush ordered the invasion on Iraq. He rushed to war using false intelligence, without international support, and with no plan to win the peace. When President Bush sent our armed forces into Iraq we had no exit strategy and therefore no victory strategy. It's unacceptable that two years later, we still don't have an endgame.

The war is drawing on. The attacks on American soldiers continue. Despite the successful political milestone of the Iraqi elections, the violence in the country continues to grow. Iraq is less secure than it was a year ago, not more so. In the absence of an exit strategy, we're pursuing the same strategy that has only led to more casualties. With more than 100,000 American troops occupying Iraq for nearly two years, there's more violence in Iraq, and the insurgency is only growing stronger.

I am of the opinion that our experience in Iraq and the evidence we have points to one conclusion – our current strategy isn't working. In fact, our strategy does more to fuel the insurgency than suppress it.

Over the last year, we increased our troop presence in Iraq from 115,000 to 150,000. We've killed or captured more than 1,000-3,000 insurgents every month for more than a year. But with thousands of new recruits, the insurgency has quadrupled in size, from at least 5,000 to at least 20,000. That doesn't include the 100,000 to 200,000 average Iraqis who are aiding and abetting the insurgency.

The insurgency is really a loose alliance of different factions within Iraq who probably disagree on more than they agree on. But they're being united and driven by the sense that Iraq is under foreign occupation. 65 percent of Iraqis oppose the presence of U.S. forces, including 68 percent of Shiites and 80 percent of Sunnis, according to a Zogby poll. The insurgents wouldn't be able to operate if they weren't getting help from the civilian population in the form of arms, sanctuary, and perhaps most importantly, intelligence. This is a native insurgency -- 96 percent of the insurgents we've captured in Iraq are Iraqis.

Military strategists say that the only way to defeat such an insurgency is to win the support of the people. The "center of gravity" in this type of war is not the insurgents – it's the civilian population. The Bush Administration's strategy is to fight the insurgents until every last one of them is killed or gives up. But the problem with this strategy is that it's only going to prolong the violence indefinitely.

Iraq has a population of 25 million with a median age of 19. 30-40 percent of Iraqis are unemployed. They have access to 250,000 tons of explosives and 4,000 shoulder-fired missiles left over from the old regime that we failed to secure because the Bush Administration didn't plan for it.

The fact is that no conventional military strategy is going to win this kind of war. In fact, in many ways, the heavy American presence in Iraq is impeding progress.

A month ago, Iraq held elections that were successful in most of the country. The elections were inspiring but only a first step. The harder part is still ahead. Iraq's transitional government now has to write a Constitution and build security forces that are capable of taking over responsibility for security.

As long as we give Iraq's new leaders an open-ended guarantee that we'll protect them, we reduce the incentive for them to make concessions and involve more Sunnis in the drafting of the Constitution. And without a timeframe for bringing our forces home, there's no urgency for the Iraqi security forces to get up to speed and take primary responsibility for security. Why should they risk their lives when Americans are fighting and dying for them? Finally, any government that is viewed as dependent on America is going to lose credibility and support.

We need to change the dynamic in Iraq, and the best way to accomplish that is a timetable for a US withdrawal.

The United States should make clear that we have no intention of staying in Iraq permanently. We need to make this absolutely clear, because the bases and runways we're building in Iraq are sending the opposite message. And as soon as possible, we should shift our focus from engaging in combat against the insurgents to training Iraqis to do the job themselves. The only way to improve security is if Iraqis are up front and Americans are in the background. Finally, as we begin to draw down our military presence in Iraq, we would step up our economic assistance. We need a Marshall Plan for Iraq that focuses on creating jobs for Iraqis, not profits for foreign contractors like Halliburton. By making clear that they are there only as temporary peacekeepers not permanent occupiers, our forces won't be magnets for violence.

A timetable would splinter insurgent groups who have set aside their own differences to unite against the U.S. It would make clear to Iraq's leaders that soon they'll be responsible for their own security. It would enhance the credibility of the Iraqi government, and America's credibility throughout the world. And it would be a light at the end of the tunnel for our troops as well as taxpayers.

In Iraq, I met with many of our soldiers and Marines. They're ready to serve any mission. But they and their families want a reasonable expectation of when this mission will end. With all of the tragic mistakes that have been made so far, no strategy in Iraq will be without risks. The question is what strategy will give us the best chance of achieving our most basic goal -- a stable, self-sufficient Iraq that doesn't threaten its neighbors or the world.

I believe that strategy is a phased drawdown according to a timetable that gives our commanders flexibility, but makes clear that the vast majority of our forces will leave Iraq over the next 12-18 months.

Our strategy has to change. And Congress has to get more involved in shaping our policy. President Bush is asking Congress for another \$80 billion. The worst thing that Congress could do for our troops is to write a blank check without ensuring that we have a real plan to get them out of Iraq. That's why I led my Democratic colleagues on the Armed Services Committee this week in urging our Chairman to have hearings and full consideration of the \$80 billion request. We can't continue to fund the Iraq War without accountability and without an exit strategy.

I will close with a final thought. Last month, in defying the threats of violence and going to cast their votes, the Iraqi people proved that they're willing to risk their lives to have a stake in determining their country's future. Iraqis want to be independent -- not just on paper but in reality. And I believe it's in America's best interests to give Iraqis real ownership over their country sooner rather than later. Thank you for inviting me here today. And I'd be happy to take any questions you might have.

###

"Iraq Exit Strategy: After the Election, Begin Pull Out of U.S. Troops"

Op-ed in *The Metro West Daily News*

By Congressman Marty Meehan

January 30, 2005

The removal of Saddam Hussein's murderous regime nearly two years ago was a major accomplishment by the U.S. military. The courage and skill with which our men and women in uniform performed this mission was remarkable. Visiting with them recently on a trip to Iraq, Afghanistan and Jordan only reinforced my conviction that we have the finest fighting force in the world.

But it also underscored my belief that our current policy in Iraq is not working. The last time I was in Iraq, in August 2003, I was able to walk the streets freely and to interact directly with Iraqis in their daily lives. On this trip, my congressional colleagues and I stayed only in fortified areas and traveled with an armed military convoy.

Over the last year, the situation in Iraq has descended even further into violence and chaos, even as our military presence has increased by nearly 50 percent. At the same time, the insurgency has grown stronger and more deadly. When we fight the insurgents, they are no match for our forces. But all too often we don't have that chance because they operate in the shadows, finding sanctuary among the civilian population. Unfortunately, the Iraqis whose support we need to expose and defeat the insurgency have only been alienated by the occupation and the lack of security.

In response to deepening concern over this situation, the Pentagon recently announced the appointment of a retired four-star general to review our entire strategy in Iraq. For those of us who have urged the Bush administration to change its approach for months, this is an overdue development.

The post-invasion phase of the war in Iraq has been characterized by continued poor planning, miscalculations and lost opportunities to win the support of the Iraqi people. But what's done is done. We need to learn from our mistakes, but most important we need to look forward.

If we make the right choices from this point on, the legacy of our involvement in Iraq will be that we removed a dictator and formed a long-term strategic alliance with a new Iraq. If we make the wrong choices, we risk expending more lives and resources in pursuit of a failed strategy.

Some people think the United States should leave Iraq immediately. But "cutting and running" could lead to anarchy and civil war. Others think an increase in our military presence is the right solution. However, not only is our military dangerously overstretched, but as we have seen, adding more troops does not mean more security.

I believe the United States should announce as soon as possible a timetable for bringing U.S. troops home from Iraq. By mid-2006 the vast majority of our forces should leave Iraq.

Announcing a phased drawdown of troops will begin to convince the Iraqi people that our forces are temporary peacekeepers, not permanent occupiers. This strategy would splinter the many insurgent factions who have come together only to fight the U.S. occupation. It would also enhance the credibility of more moderate Iraqi leaders including Prime Minister Allawi, who have been undermined by the appearance of being American "puppets." Finally, it would help convince our allies around the world to aid in the reconstruction efforts the first step toward healing the rifts caused by differences over the Iraq war.

Two key factors will allow Iraq to move forward as a sovereign nation while U.S. troops come home the training of quality Iraqi forces and the creation of Iraqi jobs.

Training security forces must be our highest priority because lasting security in Iraq can only be provided by Iraqis. I visited the training grounds and was pleased to see that after months of delays, the program is finally on track under the leadership of Lt. Gen. David Petraeus. Instead of sending Iraqis out to patrol the streets with only a few weeks training, Iraqi forces are now building the skills they will need to counter the insurgency.

Second, with unemployment in Iraq at 30-to-40 percent, we must change how our aid money is used. Only about \$4 billion of the \$22 billion that Congress directed for Iraq reconstruction has actually been spent. The aid process must be sped up and money should be steered to projects that create immediate employment for Iraqis. As we draw down our military presence in Iraq, the United States must continue to support Iraq's economic development.

As the Iraqi people take the next steps toward assuming real ownership of their country, they want an end to the military occupation.

The United States serves its own best interests by honoring their desire for independence and beginning to bring our troops home.

###

“Iraq: Finding a Responsible Exit”
Remarks at the Brookings Institution
By Congressman Marty Meehan
January 25, 2005

It has been nearly two years since we invaded Iraq and removed one of the world's most brutal regimes. But two years later, America's armed forces are confronting a far more resilient enemy – a growing insurgency that has plunged Iraq into violence and chaos. The elections are drawing closer, but peace and stability seem to be moving farther and farther away.

How we got to this point in time has been the subject of extensive debate. How did our intelligence fail us so badly about Iraq's WMD? Was intelligence deliberately manipulated by the Bush Administration in the rush to war? Why didn't the Administration give the UN inspectors more time? How did we allow so much chaos to grow out of Saddam's downfall? Why didn't we have a better plan to secure the peace?

Many of us have strong views about these issues, and many of us have been quite vocal in expressing them. Unfortunately, when you have a hotly contested presidential campaign, the national debate often descends into starkly partisan terms. I believe this is what has happened to much of the debate about our policy in Iraq.

In Congress the partisanship was especially bad. Most Republicans saw it as their responsibility to defend the President's policies, however flawed. Most Democrats viewed their role as questioning and criticizing all that went wrong without necessarily offering policy alternatives. The result has been a failure to forge a bipartisan consensus and develop answers to the pressing questions about our involvement in Iraq. By rallying behind the Administration's policies, the Republican Congress failed in its responsibility to lead – and not just follow – on issues of war and peace. At the same time, many Democrats who opposed the war from the beginning have spent more energy lamenting the past than thinking about solutions for the future.

A substantive, non-partisan reassessment of America's goals and options in Iraq is long overdue. The time has come for us to change our focus from the missteps of the past to the challenge that confronts us in the immediate future. When I visited our soldiers on the frontlines, they weren't focused on the mistakes of last year. They were concerned about what we're doing today and tomorrow. Now more than ever, with our current policy going nowhere, America needs to forge bipartisan consensus behind a responsible strategy for Iraq.

Today I challenge my colleagues in Congress to work together to develop answers to the most urgent question facing our country today: How can the United States put Iraq on a path toward self-sufficiency and begin to bring our troops home in a way that advances our strategic interests?

We owe it to the American people. And we owe it to the brave men and women who are putting their lives on the line every day.

All of us in Congress have met with families of Guardsmen and Reservists whose deployments have been extended. We have spoken with too many mothers of soldiers – and attended too many funerals – to leave these fundamental questions unanswered. We must stop looking backward and thinking defensively. We must start looking forward and developing proactive ideas about the next steps in Iraq.

It's clear that the Administration has no endgame in sight. It's time for Congress to reassert its role in foreign policy and to take the lead in providing an exit strategy in Iraq.

The Situation in Iraq

The first step toward an Iraq exit strategy is an honest assessment of the facts on the ground there. It's time to take off the rose-tinted glasses, put aside our partisan hostilities, and start with the basics: What's good and what's bad? What's still possible in Iraq? And how do we get there?

In search of answers to these questions, I returned to Iraq earlier this month with several of my congressional colleagues from the Armed Services Committee. The last time I was in Iraq was August of 2003 – four months after the fall of Baghdad. Iraq was hardly a safe place then. But we were able to walk the streets and talk with average Iraqis, something I had hoped to do this time.

Unfortunately, the threat of violence was simply too high. Baghdad is still a war zone. My colleagues and I traveled in heavily armored military convoys, zigzagging through the streets to avoid ambushes. In Iraq today, the expectation is that any American or anyone associated with the Americans will be attacked.

The United States has spent more than \$150 billion on military operations in Iraq, with another \$80 billion forthcoming. In today's news it was reported that the Army is planning on continuing these troops levels until 2007. We've maintained between 100,000 and 150,000 troops there for two years. Over the past year, America has sent more soldiers and more money to Iraq, but we have seen only more violence. As Iraq prepares to hold elections five days from now, the violence is worse than it has ever been.

All of us hope that the elections will proceed peacefully, safely, and with maximum participation. But we should be realistic that regardless of who votes or who wins, the insurgency will continue. When Saddam was captured, we hoped the insurgents would give up. When we transferred sovereignty, we hoped the violence would end. When we routed the insurgents in Fallujah, we hoped it would break their back. With each milestone, the insurgency has come back stronger and more deadly.

Attacks on U.S. forces have grown steadily, both in frequency and sophistication. Attacks on Iraqi security forces, civilians, and infrastructure are also on the rise. Michael O'Hanlon and others here at Brookings have developed an index that distills the situation in Iraq into raw numbers. According to the "Brookings Index," Coalition forces have been killing and capturing 1,000 to 3,000 insurgents every month for more than a year. But over that same time, the insurgency has quadrupled its ranks from at least 5,000 to at least 20,000. More troubling is the network of Iraqi civilians – 200,000 by some estimates – who offer both active and passive support: arms, materiel, sanctuary, and most importantly, intelligence. In many instances, better intelligence than our forces have.

It is time to accept that one of the basic assumptions held by the Bush Administration – and many of its critics – no longer applies. More troops do not mean more security in Iraq. Despite 150,000 boots on the ground and tactical victories in Fallujah and elsewhere, the insurgency is only growing in size and lethal capacity.

It may have been possible at one point in time to pacify Iraq with an overwhelming American force. Had we gone in with "several hundred thousand troops" like General Shinseki said we would need, perhaps the insurgency never would have developed. We'll never know for sure. But whatever chance we had is gone now. Ramping up our troop presence now will not turn the tables in Iraq, and it would probably make the situation worse. The undeniable fact is that the insurgency is being fueled by the very presence of the American military.

Back in July of 2003, Gen. John Abizaid called Iraq a "classic guerrilla war." But we have continued to wage war as if we were fighting a conventional army. The result has been that the "center of gravity" of any counter-insurgency – the civilian population – has moved further and further away from us. The growing hostility is palpable when you're in Iraq, and it is measured in polls taken of Iraqis by our own government. In November of 2003, only 11 percent of Iraqis said they would feel safer if Coalition forces left Iraq. Six months later, 55 percent did. In the most recent poll that asked the question, 2 percent viewed the United States as liberators, and 92 percent as occupiers.

Iraqis have grown tired of an occupation that has provided them neither security nor meaningful sovereignty. Iraqis were apprehensive of America's intentions to begin with, and every time President Bush signals that our forces will remain in Iraq "for as long as it takes" it reconfirms their suspicion that we intend a permanent presence. Every time Iraqi citizens see a Bradley fighting vehicle rolling through their streets or a Blackhawk helicopter overhead, it undermines our assertion that Iraq is already sovereign. Every time Iraqi bystanders are killed in Coalition actions, it further erodes the good will we earned by ridding them of Saddam. And even when innocent Iraqis are murdered by insurgents, the United States is blamed for failing to provide security. If the world's most potent army cannot make the streets safe, Iraqis are asking, is that really what we're there for?

The first step in achieving stability in Iraq is recognizing that the U.S. presence has become inherently destabilizing. We also need to recognize the fact that for the most part, we are fighting not foreign terrorists or former regime loyalists but indigenous factions within

Iraq who have united to against us. It's a native insurgency, fueled by a combination of volatile ingredients: A population of 25 million, 5 million of them Sunnis, with a median age of 19 years old; A national jobless rate of 30-40 percent, with pockets of extreme unemployment; 400,000 skilled and experienced army soldiers, dispersed throughout the country with their weapons but without their salaries or pensions; 4,000 shoulder-fired missiles left over from the old regime; and 250,000 tons of unsecured explosives.

The insurgency's size and strength are unlikely to decrease anytime soon. Attempting to kill or capture every last insurgent is an impossible task. And as long as that is the thrust of our strategy we will continue along a downward spiral.

An Exit Strategy

Confronted with a growing, native insurgency, America is left with three options – and two of them are not really options at all.

The first option is to withdraw immediately. Given the current state of Iraqi security forces, this option is a non-starter. Even if you believe that the United States should never have entered Iraq, it doesn't follow that we should leave now. The chaos that would result would be much worse than the vacuum of authority left by the downfall of Saddam and the human consequences could be even greater. From a strategic standpoint, immediate withdrawal undermines America's credibility and destabilizes the entire region.

The second option is to stay on the same path, as the President says "for as long as it takes." I believe that this course of action would only cause the problem to grow worse. As late as May of 2003, the Administration was predicting that only 30,000 troops would remain in Iraq by the fall of that year. Twenty months later, five times that many remain. The most compelling reason not to continue down the same path is that the occupation has become counterproductive to stability and progress in Iraq. With U.S. forces serving as a focal point for tensions and violence, factions within Iraq have turned against us when they should be confronting each other peacefully in setting up a new Iraqi government. The indefinite U.S. presence is forestalling the political compromises that are ultimately necessary to end the violence in Iraq.

I am proposing a third option, that President Bush and Prime Minister Allawi announce a timetable for a phased drawdown of U.S. forces in Iraq.

Changing the dynamic in Iraq means handing the security of the Iraqi people back to the Iraqis and bringing an end to the occupation. Under this proposal, the United States would draw down the majority of our forces by the end of this year. Only a small and mobile force would remain by mid-2006, two years after the transfer of sovereignty.

Announcing a timetable for a phased withdrawal over the next 12-18 months will change the underlying dynamic in Iraq in several ways.

First, it would help win the support of the Iraqi people for a political process and a government untainted by the appearance that the U.S. controls them.

Second, announcing a drawdown would splinter insurgent groups who have set aside their own differences to unite against the United States. Foreign jihadists, Sunni nationalists, and Shiite extremists have little in common except their opposition to the U.S. presence in Iraq.

Third, a timetable for withdrawal would encourage the Iraqi government and the factions within Iraq to deal with each other in setting up a new Iraqi government rather than relying on American troops to make the sacrifices. A withdrawal could be structured in such a way as to create incentives for violent factions within Iraq to come to the negotiating table rather than engaging in armed insurrection.

Fourth, renouncing any long-term presence in Iraq would enhance America's legitimacy throughout the world. It would be the first step in putting the divisions we've had with our allies behind us so we can focus on the war on terror.

Fifth, the central political question in Iraq is not whether the United States should leave, but how soon. The politics in Iraq are such that the incoming government – whoever it is – will demand the U.S.'s withdrawal as soon as it is confident of its own survival.

Finally, a timetable for withdrawal would be that light at the end of the tunnel for our military, which has been severely overstretched and unfairly deployed. While in Iraq, I met with many of our soldiers and Marines. Their spirits are high and morale is strong. They are prepared for any mission. But they and their families want a reasonable expectation of when this mission will end. From a standpoint of readiness, a phased drawdown in Iraq would forestall what could otherwise soon become a recruiting and retention crisis in the armed forces.

A Realistic Strategy

We can withdraw the vast majority of our forces from Iraq by the end of this year under a realistic plan. This is not a cut and run strategy but a phased drawdown that would leave a small, mobile, and low-profile U.S. presence in Iraq for a reasonable timeframe. This smaller contingent of approximately 30,000 troops could continue to fill specialty roles, such as training Iraqi forces and engaging in quick strikes against insurgent or terrorist infrastructure that minimize the risk of civilian casualties. A smaller, more remote presence wouldn't patrol Iraqi cities but it would be enough to prevent outbreaks of civil warfare.

Two factors will allow Iraq to move forward while our troops come home. First, our highest priority must be on training high-quality Iraqi security forces. For too long, the Bush Administration assumed that Americans would bear an indefinite burden of security in Iraq. But lasting security can only be provided by Iraqis. In the words of President Bush, "ultimately the success in Iraq is going to be the willingness of the Iraqi citizens to fight for their own freedom." With the U.S. providing an open-ended guarantee for security, there's

little urgency for Iraqis opposed to the insurgency to take charge and fight it. In addition, the training program was set back for months by a focus on quantity over quality. As Peter Khalil and others have observed and pointed out, a couple weeks training is not nearly enough.

While in Iraq, I met with General Petraeus and surveyed the training of Iraqi security forces. General Petraeus gets it. He knows that to fight a sophisticated insurgency these Iraqis will need to be highly skilled. Despite the rocky start, the training program is moving forward. I believe 12-18 months is enough time to train Iraqi security forces with the skills they'll need to confront the insurgency.

As important as training Iraqi security forces is creating jobs for Iraqis. It is outrageous that of the \$22 billion that Congress has committed to Iraq reconstruction, only \$4 billion has actually been spent. And a huge percentage of that money has gone to provide security for foreign contractors. When General Petraeus took the 101st Airborne into Mosul, he used riches from Saddam's palaces to keep Iraqi army soldiers on the payroll. He invested in local reconstruction projects that put people to work immediately. It was one of the reasons that Mosul was relatively quiet for so long. It may not be a model of free market capitalism but it is a model for success in a country that is desperate for jobs. It's worth replicating. As the U.S. begins to reduce our military involvement in Iraq, our investment in Iraq's reconstruction must endure.

Conclusion

Our national conversation about Iraq needs more realism, and more focus on the future rather than the past. We need to refocus on our original goal – a stable Iraq that does not threaten its neighbors, develop WMD, export terrorism, or terrorize its own people. Hard experience and tragedy have taught us that prolonged military occupation in Iraq will not end the insurgency, stabilize Iraq, or bring us closer to our strategic goals. It will only bring more casualties, and more hatred toward America within Iraq and beyond.

Iraqis want freedom. They also want control over their daily lives and their country's future. The best hopes for a stable, peaceful, democratic Iraq are achieved by making it clear to Iraqis that the occupation is not indefinite – that soon they will bear the burden of creating a responsible, democratic state.

Iraq's political development is occurring on a clearly defined timetable – elections this Sunday, a constitution drafted by August 15, an election to ratify the Constitution by October 15, new elections before December 15, and a permanent government in place by the end of December. Iraq needs a similar timetable for taking responsibility for its security.

By laying out a timetable for a phased withdrawal, the United States sends a clear message to Iraqis and all citizens of the world: We believe Iraq is capable of governing itself and making decisions about its future. The removal of Saddam Hussein was a victory for the United States. But lasting success in Iraq won't be achieved until the country is stable – and the last American soldiers have come home.

###

“An Exit Strategy for Iraq”
Op-ed in *The Boston Globe*
By Congressman Marty Meehan
January 16, 2005

Zigzagging through the streets of Baghdad in a heavily armored military convoy doesn't give you an opportunity to talk to Iraqis. But it tells you everything about the security situation. What I saw in Iraq last week was a different country than the one I visited in August of 2003. Where Americans could once walk around freely, Baghdad today is a highly fortified city and Americans cannot interact with Iraqis who have not been screened for weapons and explosives.

The security situation in Iraq has significantly deteriorated, even as the American troop presence increased by more than 50 percent during 2004. Despite intensifying efforts to root out the insurgency, every measure seems to indicate that it continues to grow in strength and sophistication. The frequency of attacks is on the rise, the insurgents are finding a growing base of sanctuary and support in the population, and they seem to have quickly rebounded from defeats in Fallujah and elsewhere.

The facts on the ground indicate that the violence will continue past the upcoming elections on Jan. 30, no matter what the result. This worsening state of affairs has prompted Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to announce a bottom-up review of US policy. This review is long overdue. Two years into America's occupation of Iraq, it is high time to rethink our goals and ask whether our current strategy is helping to achieve those goals.

Unlike in Germany and Japan after World War II - and more recently in Bosnia and Kosovo - the commitment to maintaining a long-term military presence is not the key to a successful peacekeeping and reconstruction strategy in Iraq. As former CIA official Michael Vickers put it, our "presence has fueled the Iraqi insurgency as much as it has suppressed it."

Every time the administration signals that our troops will be in Iraq for "as long as it takes," it confirms Iraqis' suspicions that the United States intends a permanent presence. Every time Iraqi citizens see a Bradley fighting vehicle rolling through their cities, it undermines our assertion that Iraq is sovereign. Every time Iraqi bystanders are killed in coalition actions, it further erodes the good will the United States earned by toppling Saddam's regime. The American presence has become inherently destabilizing.

Some have suggested that the United States should immediately withdraw. But this option could lead to the collapse of the interim Iraqi government and ensuing civil war. Another option, increasing the American presence, is also not realistic. Our military is dangerously overstretched and, thus far, increases in our force size have been ineffective at weakening the insurgency.

The best option to turn the situation around is to announce a timetable for a phased drawdown of US forces. The United States should lay out and stick to a schedule in which the majority of our forces leave Iraq by the end of this year and all but a much smaller contingent leave by mid-2006 - a full two years after the transfer of sovereignty. Perhaps most important, President Bush must make clear that the United States does not seek to maintain a permanent military presence in Iraq.

Announcing a timetable for a carefully planned withdrawal would help win support for the fledgling Iraqi government, which has been undermined by the appearance that it is little more than a puppet of a foreign occupier. It would also instantly enhance our legitimacy in many parts of the world, helping encourage allies to contribute specialized units to help train Iraqi security forces.

In Iraq today, US forces are the focal point for tensions and violence. This has unified the various elements of the insurgency - Islamic extremists, Sunni nationalists, foreign jihadists, all of whom have little in common but opposition to the US presence. Our current strategy has removed the urgency for Iraq's ethnic and religious factions to forge the political compromises needed for a workable balance of power. A withdrawal could be structured in a way to create incentives for various factions to come to the negotiating table instead of engaging in armed insurrection.

Two key factors will enable the withdrawal of forces over the next 12 to 18 months. First, training the Iraqi security forces must be our highest priority. Training should emphasize quality, not quantity. This is crucial, as lasting security in Iraq can only be provided by Iraqis.

The United States must also reform its reconstruction efforts to expedite aid money to projects that have an immediate impact on employment. Thus far, only about \$4 billion of the \$21 billion Iraq reconstruction fund has actually been spent. With unemployment at 30-40 percent, the insurgency has found an ample supply of labor. Even as we seek to bring the military chapter of our involvement to a close, we must continue to support Iraq's transition into a fully functioning, stable economy.

The removal of Saddam Hussein was a victory for the United States. Our brave young men and women in uniform fought brilliantly to bring an end to the genocidal Ba'athist regime. But lasting success in Iraq won't be achieved until the country is stable - and the last American soldiers have come home.

###

“Reflections on U.S. Policy in Iraq”
Remarks at Logan Airport
Upon Returning from Iraq and Afghanistan
By Congressman Marty Meehan
January 15, 2005

This morning I'd like to share my reflections on what I saw in Iraq and where I believe our policy should be going. This was my second trip to Iraq. On this latest trip, I found our young men and women in uniform as impressive as ever. But I also found a deteriorating security situation. I met not only with generals and senior commanders, but with enlisted soldiers and Marines. Our soldiers are aware of the challenges that face them and are prepared to fulfill any mission.

Two years ago, our fighting men and women toppled a brutal regime with unmatched courage and unprecedented skill. They are now bearing the entire burden of security in one of the most violent places on earth. Their professionalism is nothing short of remarkable. The main purpose of my trip was to say thank you on behalf of all of us back home. When return to Washington, I am going to continue the fight to make sure that our fighting men and women have the resources they need to protect themselves and do their jobs, be it armor for their humvees or Kevlar vests. We owe it to them.

The last time I was in Iraq it was hardly a stable place. But I could walk the streets and talk with average Iraqis, something I had hoped to do this time. Unfortunately, the threat of violence was simply too high. My congressional colleagues and I traveled under heavy guard at all times. Two years into the occupation we are going in the wrong direction. Despite sending more soldiers and more money to Iraq, we are only seeing more violence.

My trip to Iraq has reinforced a conclusion I've come to over many months. Our current policy in Iraq is failing. Because of the failures in planning and leadership over the past two years, our options are more limited than they once were. But there is light at the end of the tunnel if we change our approach to this war.

We are left with three principal choices -- and two of them are not really options at all. The first is to withdraw immediately. I do not believe this is a viable option given the current state of Iraqi security forces. The second option is to stay on the same path, as the President says "for as long as it takes." I believe that this course of action will only cause the problem to grow worse.

I am proposing today a third option, that President Bush and Prime Minister Allawi announce a timetable for a phased drawdown of our forces in Iraq. I believe it is this strategy, an exit strategy that will ultimately accomplish our goals in Iraq.

I am proposing that the United States begin the process of drawing down the majority of our forces by the end of this year and all but a small and mobile force by mid-2006.

Changing the dynamic in Iraq means handing the security of the Iraqi people back to the Iraqis and bringing an end to the occupation. Announcing a timetable for a phased withdrawal over the next 12-18 months will change the underlying dynamic in Iraq in several ways.

First, it would help win the support of the Iraqi people for a political process and a government that is untainted by the appearance that we are controlling them.

Second, it would splinter insurgent groups who have set aside their own differences to unite against the United States.

Third, it would encourage the Iraqi government and the factions within Iraq to deal with each other rather relying on us to make the sacrifices.

Fourth, it would put the divisions we've had with our allies behind us so we can focus on the war on terror.

Finally, it would be that light at the end of the tunnel for a military that is severely overstretched and unfairly deployed.

In closing, I want to be clear that we cannot simply cut and run. We must complete the training of Iraqi security forces and we must make a long-term commitment to Iraq in the form of reconstruction assistance. But we must make clear our intention to leave. The sooner we change course in Iraq the better. It's time to get the job done in the right way and begin bringing our troops home.

###

LYNN WOOLSEY
6TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEES:

EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
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November 15, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Despite two and a half years of warfare, including the deaths of over 2,000 American soldiers and injuries to 15,000 others, Iraq remains as unstable as it was when you declared an end to major combat operations in May 2003. We need to face the fact that the situation in Iraq is not improving – nor will it improve as long as our troops remain there, because the presence of over 160,000 American soldiers on Iraqi soil is the main catalyst fueling Iraq's insurgency.

The time is long overdue for the U.S. to change course in Iraq and bring our troops home. To transition from war to peace, we recommend that your administration immediately make four pivotal policy changes in Iraq: 1) engage in greater multilateral cooperation with our allies; 2) pursue diplomatic/non-military initiatives; 3) prepare for a robust post-conflict reconciliation process; and 4) withdraw the U.S. Armed Forces.

Multilateral Cooperation

The U.S. must engage the international community, including the UN and NATO, to establish a multinational interim security force for Iraq. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations at the United Nations, for example, is well suited to this task.

Diplomatic/Non-Military Initiatives

The U.S. must pursue a "diplomatic offensive," shifting its role from that of Iraq's military occupier to its reconstruction partner. This means giving Iraq back to the Iraqi people, working with them to rebuild their economic and physical infrastructure, and creating Iraqi jobs. The U.S. must also engage the United Nations to oversee Iraq's economic and humanitarian needs, renounce any desire to control Iraqi oil, and ensure that the U.S. does not maintain lasting military bases in Iraq.

Post-Conflict Reconciliation

An international peace commission must be established to oversee Iraq's post-war reconciliation. This group would include members of the global community who have experience in international peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and would be tasked with coordinating peace talks between Iraq's various factions.

Withdrawal of the U.S. Armed Forces

The cost of the war in Iraq – both human and financial – has been staggering. Tragically, the American and Iraqi lives lost, and the billions of dollars spent, have failed to actually make our country safer from the threat of international terrorism. To end the war in Iraq, save lives, and prevent the U.S. from spiraling even further into debt, the U.S. must withdraw its Armed Forces from Iraq.

Mr. President, after Iraq holds its December parliamentary elections, the country's leaders will be responsible for charting Iraq's course. The international community, including the U.S., can then provide non-militaristic support to ensure a self-sufficient Iraq. We look forward to your response to our recommendations and would welcome the opportunity to discuss them with you.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan
Lynn Woolsey

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

November 9, 2005

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leader Pelosi:

The 'Out of Iraq' Congressional Caucus was established to bring to the House of Representatives an on-going debate about the war in Iraq, and to examine the Administration's justifications for the decision to go to war, to urge the return of US service members to their families as soon as possible, and to provide a voice in Congress for the individuals and groups who support these efforts.

Until today, the 'Out of Iraq' Caucus chose not to endorse any one particular legislative vehicle in an effort to support a broad array of views on how and when to remove US troops from Iraq. However, since the Caucus was founded, we feel that public opinion on the war in Iraq has moved decisively in favor of reducing the US troop presence as soon as possible.

While there are many excellent pieces of legislation on Iraq before Congress right now, including legislation introduced by Ms. Woolsey, Mr. McGovern, Mr. Skelton, and Mr. Price, we have chosen House Joint Resolution 55, introduced by Mr. Abercrombie, as our vehicle for forcing the House to debate the future of the US military presence in Iraq. We chose this particular legislation because it has the highest number of cosponsors (63) of any Iraq resolution, including five Republicans. It cannot be dismissed therefore as a Democratic maneuver.

We propose today that the Democratic Leadership support the filing of a discharge petition to require consideration of House Joint Resolution 55. This discharge petition is intended to force real debate on the House floor on US policy in Iraq. Neither the Armed Services Committee nor the International Relations Committee has held a hearing on this critical legislation since it was introduced in June. Given the dismal record of oversight efforts on all aspects of the war in Iraq, we feel this is the only path left open to show the American people that Congress is engaged and actively seeking to find a way out of Iraq.

We have written the petition in a form that would allow 17 hours of general debate and unlimited germane amendments debated under the 5 minute rule. We feel that regardless of where members have been or may be now on the war, all Democrats can support having a full and open debate about the future direction of US involvement in Iraq – something that the Republican leadership has continually blocked despite the deteriorating security situation in Iraq.

We ask for your support in this effort to demand full debate on US policy in Iraq. It is imperative that the question – ‘where are the Democrats?’ – be answered.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Neil Abercrombie

John Lewis

Bill Delahunt

Barney Frank

William Lacy Clay

Diane E. Watson

Barbara Lee

John B. Larson

Michael E. Capuano

Lynn C. Woolsey

Maxine Waters

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM & HOMELAND SECURITY

April 5, 2005

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Room 3E880
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

I urge you to report immediately to Congress on steps the Department of Defense has taken to prevent human rights abuses against military detainees, pursuant to its responsibility under Public Law 108-375, Section 1092. Enclosed is a copy of the provision for your review. The report, due on April 1st, has not yet been received.

The human rights abuses that took place at Guantanamo Bay and Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq called for greater accountability, consistency and transparency in the treatment of military detainees. To this end, I worked with Chairman Duncan Hunter on the House Armed Services Committee to include a reporting requirement in the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2005. President Bush signed the Act into law on October 28, 2004.

This provision mandates that all commanders who oversee detention facilities must provide their personnel with documented training in the Geneva Conventions. Moreover, it mandates that all detainees receive a written explanation of their basic rights under international law. We agreed upon the reporting requirement, rather than issuing explicit and detailed training instructions, in deference to your need to have flexibility in devising and implementing a new anti-torture policy. Meanwhile, the report would assist the Congress to exercise its federal oversight role in monitoring the new policy's implementation.

I am concerned that the Defense Department's failure to submit its training plan sends a signal to our servicemembers, the American people, and the international community, that upholding human rights and the rule of law is not the U.S. military's highest priority. Given the recent release of the Church report, which found at least 26 detainee deaths, it is past time that the Pentagon vocally and vehemently condemned human rights violations as a tool of war. I am also concerned with how this breach could affect our Nation's ability to hold other countries accountable for violating international norms of human rights. We must act expeditiously to demonstrate that the United States remains a

global champion of human rights and will never again permit abuses to occur under our authority again.

I request that you notify Congress at your earliest convenience as to when it will receive this report proscribing a clear and comprehensive training proposal for servicemembers and contractors. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mary Meehan", written over the printed name.

Mary Meehan
Ranking Member
HASC Subcommittee on Terrorism and
Unconventional Threats

Enclosure

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 3, 2005

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hunter:

We are writing to request that the House Armed Services Committee hold hearings to review the Administration's fiscal year 2005 emergency supplemental request for Iraq and Afghanistan. As members of the committee, we believe it is critical that we exercise our oversight responsibility to ensure that our troops get the equipment that they need and that taxpayer funds are spent wisely and with accountability.

In a recent *Congressional Quarterly* article, you stated that the House Armed Services Committee would "do as much oversight and participation in the supplemental as is required." Accordingly, we urge you to assert the Committee's leadership and jurisdiction by convening to authorize the supplemental request prior to its appropriation.

In particular, we believe that it is the duty of the Committee to review the supplemental to ensure that all of the funding is for emergency needs. We are concerned that some of the requests do not directly relate to our military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan or are multi-year programs that are predictable and should be authorized in the regular budget process.

We are also concerned that the broad flexibility requested by the Administration for certain accounts reduces accountability. The Defense Department has asked for unfettered authority in using \$5.7 billion to train Iraqi Security Forces, stating that, "placing conditions or restrictions on the availability of those funds would almost certainly hamper our ability to develop Iraqi Security Forces capable of assuming responsibility for Iraqi security." Furthermore, some of the requested funding is vague in nature and deserves closer examination. This includes \$6.2 billion for classified or miscellaneous programs and \$330 million for the Program Contracting Office in Iraq.

Finally, we would like to express our continued frustration at the Administration's failure to lay out a long-term strategy to win the peace in Iraq. The Administration's inability to budget for operational costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through the normal budget process has resulted in funding gaps for critical supplies and force protection

equipment for our troops. More than three-and-a-half years after the tragic events of September 11th, the cost of our military operations has remained steady and is predicted at \$4.1 billion per month in Iraq and \$800,000 per month in Afghanistan. It is time that the Administration recognized these costs and budgeted for them accordingly.

Mr. Chairman, we share with you your commitment to providing our brave troops with the tools they need to win the war on terror. However, this supplemental request should not be seen as a blank check to be spent without accountability in the absence of a plan to win the peace in Iraq. We therefore urge you to hold hearings so that the Committee can fulfill its rightful oversight role. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

John Spratt
Solomon P. Ortiz
Lane Evans
Gene Taylor
Neil Abercrombie
Vic Snyder
Adam Smith
Loretta Sanchez
Ellen Tauscher
Robert Andrews
Susan Davis
Steve Israel
Rick Larsen
Jim Cooper
Kendrick Meek
Mark Udall
G.K. Butterfield

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
The Pentagon
Washington DC, 20340

February 9, 2005

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

Last Sunday's elections marked a historic milestone for a majority of the Iraqi people, who have taken courageous first steps toward self-governance despite a surge in violence and threats. While we deeply appreciate the contributions of the American military in bearing a heavy burden for Iraq's security, the recent election does not change the reality of an ongoing insurgency in Iraq. Given the continued violence and concerns about the performance of the Iraqi military, we were pleased with the recent deployment of General Gary Luck to assess the training of security forces in Iraq. As Congress considers a new \$80 billion spending request for Iraq – bringing the total allocated for the war to more than \$200 billion in the past two years – we believe Congress would benefit from General Luck's findings. Accordingly, we respectfully urge the Department of Defense to brief Members of Congress on General Luck's report and disseminate this information in writing prior to the upcoming appropriations vote.

Mr. Secretary, as U.S. casualties in Iraq continue to increase – surpassing 1,400 this past month – the American people deserve to hear the Administration's plans for a future U.S. military presence in Iraq. With the number of deployable military units stretched thin, it is incumbent upon the Department of Defense to take every measure to alleviate the significant burdens placed on the brave men and women in Iraq. Currently, American troops are facing extended tours, severely limited recuperation intervals and shortened visits home. We have instituted a "back-door draft" by deploying and maintaining an exorbitant number of Army Reservists and National Guard in Iraq, who now constitute nearly half of the total force. While American involvement is vital to Iraq's future, we implore you to re-evaluate and reconstitute the strategy for a continued U.S. presence in Iraq.

Since the President declared an end to major combat operations, the insurgency has exponentially increased, with no indication of subsiding in the aftermath of the election. According to the Pentagon's own estimates, the number of insurgents have quadrupled from at least 5,000 to more than 20,000 in the past year. At the same time, Iraqi intelligence services claim that number has further increased to 200,000, which includes full and part-time fighters, as well as civilians who aid and abet them. Unfortunately, attacks have continued both on Election Day and beyond, further demonstrating that our current military strategy alone will not lead to stability and security in Iraq.

In his State of the Union Address, President Bush pledged that Iraqi security forces will "become more self-reliant and take on greater security responsibilities," allowing Coalition forces to serve increasingly in a "supporting role." But last week, Lt. Gen. James J. Lovelace, Director of Army Operations, affirmed that the Army plans to maintain its current presence of 120,000 troops in Iraq until 2007. The Iraqi security forces' skill level, loyalty to the transitional government and willingness to confront insurgents are clearly preeminent factors in shaping future U.S. policy choices in Iraq. While Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the current Iraqi security and military forces stand at 120,000 strong, these numbers do not accurately reflect the number of currently-enlisted and capable Iraqi troops. At this critical juncture, Congress must be fully informed of Gen. Luck's findings on the status of Iraqi military, security services and police.

Mr. Secretary, America's mission in Iraq must be changed to place an increased emphasis on the training of Iraqi recruits as a means of both stabilizing Iraq and bringing our troops home. As we prepare to vote on the additional \$80 billion funding request, Congress will have abdicated its responsibility to the American people if we write a blank check without the necessary analysis, insight and information from the Department of Defense. General Luck's findings are essential to this process, and we look forward to your expeditious and detailed response.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Robert Wexler
Jim McDermott
Donald Payne
Carolyn Maloney
Diane Watson
Rush Holt
Maxine Waters
Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Howard Berman
Eliot Engel
Earl Blumenauer
Bernie Sanders
G.K. Butterfield
James McGovern
Neil Abercrombie
Robert Menendez
Sam Farr
Joe Crowley
Carolyn McCarthy
Mark Udall
Ellen Tauscher
Louise Slaughter

James Oberstar
Kendrick Meek
Loretta Sanchez
Shelley Berkley
John Tanner
Tammy Baldwin
John Dingell
Barbara Lee
David Wu
Rosa DeLauro
Luis Gutierrez
Mike Thompson
John Conyers
Jan Schakowsky
Linda Sanchez
Stephen Lynch
Major Owens
Julia Carson
Lynn Woolsey
Sherrod Brown

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME, TERRORISM & HOMELAND SECURITY



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

October 22, 2004

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Honorable John Ashcroft
United States Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Dear Attorney General Ashcroft:

I am writing to request that you appoint a special counsel to investigate allegations that the United States Army Corps of Engineers failed to follow federal contracting procedures when awarding contracts to Kellogg Brown & Root (KBR), a Halliburton subsidiary, for reconstruction efforts in Iraq. I am deeply troubled by an October 21st letter from Bunnatine H. Greenhouse, President Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting of the Army Corps of Engineers, to Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee indicating that the Army Corps of Engineers took improper actions to support the interests of Halliburton in awarding defense contracts.

As you know, on March 24, 2003 the United States Army announced the award of a sole-source contract to KBR with the Army Corp of Engineers to extinguish oil well fires in Iraq and assess the need for repairs to the Iraqi oil infrastructure. It is my understanding that the Army Corps of Engineers waived competition requirements based on "unusual and compelling urgency" (DFARS 206.302-2) and selected KBR because it was the only contractor determined to be capable of beginning work on such short notice.

However, Ms. Greenhouse's letter raises startling allegations of improper behavior by the Army Corps of Engineers in awarding this contract, which threatens the very integrity of our contracting system. According to Ms. Greenhouse, KBR was given a secret contract for rebuilding Iraq's oil facilities months before the invasion of Iraq and was deemed the only company able to fulfill the contract when the military conflict began. Ms. Greenhouse also alleges that the Army Corps of Engineers inappropriately permitted KBR officials to sit in on discussions of the terms of the contract. Even more troubling is Ms. Greenhouse's assertion that she was excluded from decisions to award future contracts and her job was threatened when she raised concerns about the KBR contracts.

In light of these serious allegations, I urge you to appoint a special counsel to investigate contracting procedures used by the Defense Department in awarding reconstruction

contracts in Iraq. The transparency and integrity of the contracting process depends on such a review.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marty Meehan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marty" and last name "Meehan" clearly distinguishable.

Marty Meehan

Member,

House Armed Services Committee

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 19, 2004

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hunter,

We are writing to ask that when Congress returns in November, our committee hold hearings on whether or not U.S. troops in the field in Iraq are getting the equipment and protective gear they need.

Last December, the Commander of Combined Joint Task Force Seven, Army Lt. General Ricardo S. Sanchez wrote a letter to senior Army leadership stating that his supply of equipment was so poor that he would not be able to sustain combat operations "with rates this low." He specifically identified important systems with low readiness rates such as the M1 and Q-36/37 Radars as well as problems with fielding Interceptor Body Armor.

Last week, it was reported that soldiers from the 343rd Quartermaster Company failed to report to duty for a convoy mission across central Iraq. The soldiers are said to have been concerned about the safety of their trucks and the lack of an aviation escort. The trucks may have been missing parts and armor.

In a September survey of active duty military and their families, the Annenberg Public Policy Center reported widespread feelings of unpreparedness within the National Guard and Reserve. Forty-two percent of all respondents said that National Guard and Reservists were sent to Iraq without proper training and equipment, and 49 percent of family members agree with this assessment. Annenberg also polled nearly 2,500 Americans, 48 percent of whom believe the National Guard and Reservists had neither adequate training nor equipment.

While we understand that the Department of Defense has taken steps to address equipment shortfalls, we are concerned that close to a year after the Sanchez letter, there are still shortages of vital, life-saving equipment urgently needed by our men and women in harm's way.

We ask that you hold a hearing as soon as possible to look at both incidents and the adequacy of the Pentagon's response including the new Joint Rapid Action Cell which is expected to work directly with combatant commanders to meet urgent materiel and logistics requirements.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Ellen O. Tauscher

Gene Taylor

Lane Evans

Vic Snyder

Tim Ryan

Neil Abercrombie

Ciro Rodriguez

Susan Davis

Loretta Sanchez

Jim Cooper

Silvestre Reyes

Kendrick Meek

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 14, 2004

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20502

Dear President Bush:

As members of the House Armed Services Committee, we are writing to express our serious concerns about the repeated delays by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in declassifying the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence's report on pre-war intelligence of Iraq. We urge you to direct the CIA to meet its previously set expectations of releasing this information to the public by early June. Congress, the American people, and the international community deserve the opportunity to assess the quality and quantity of intelligence used to support the war in Iraq.

In the lead up to the war in Iraq, members of the House of Representatives – and the national security committees in particular – were given intelligence information from your administration citing credible evidence that Iraq possessed chemical, biological, and possibly nuclear weapons. We were told that these capabilities posed a clear and imminent danger to our national security. We now know that this intelligence was faulty at best.

More than a year after the invasion of Iraq, the U.S. Iraq Survey Group led by Dr. David Kay has failed to find significant evidence that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction prior to the war. In his interim report to Congress in January, Dr. Kay stated that he had found no indication that Saddam Hussein had taken steps to develop nuclear weapons following the 1998 expulsion of international weapons inspectors; no indication that Iraq possessed mobile biological warfare labs; and no indication that Iraq had resumed the production of chemical weapons – all claims made by the administration leading up to the war in Iraq.

Reports in the press suggest that U.S. intelligence may have been manipulated to support the case for war. In light of these disturbing allegations, we deserve to know whether intelligence used to support the war in Iraq was faulty or misrepresented so that we can begin to correct the failures in the collection and analysis of U.S. intelligence. We therefore urge you to ensure that the Senate report is released as expeditiously as possible.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Silvestre Reyes

Chris Bell

Tim Ryan

Solomon Ortiz

Rick Larsen

John Larson

Rob Brady

Ellen Tauscher

Lane Evans

Loretta Sanchez

Kendrick Meek

Madeline Bordallo

Gene Taylor

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 21, 2004

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush,

We are writing to express our concern with the effectiveness and the priority given by your administration to the search for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

In a response to an earlier letter sent by several members relating concern about the adequacy of efforts made to secure suspected Iraqi weapons of mass destruction sites, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs General Richard Myers wrote back on April 16th assuring that "during and following offensive operations in 2003, US forces provided security to suspected sites as quickly and safely as possible."

However, according to a letter from the director of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the United Nations Security Council sent last month and whose findings were also shared with U.S. officials, suspicious activity has been observed recently at sites of concern: "there has been extensive removal of equipment, and, in some instances, removal of entire buildings." Furthermore, "large quantities of scrap, some of if contaminated, have been transferred out of Iraq." The IAEA letter expresses concern that it is hard to evaluate whether or not the removal of material is the result of looting or of "systematic efforts to rehabilitate some of the locations."

At a time when the United States is leading global efforts to contain the spread of weapons of mass destruction, it is alarming to think that our own efforts to control suspected material in Iraq were insufficient.

After a more than four year absence, you allowed the United Nations weapons inspectors barely three months to look for weapons of mass destruction in Iraq before having them removed and beginning military operations. The rush to military action was justified by yourself and several administration officials including National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice who described the risk of not acting immediately as potentially resulting in a nuclear mushroom cloud rising over the United States.

One of the assumptions many of us made in voting to give you authority to use force in Iraq is that you had clearly identified all the sites and W.M.D. caches that caused you to identify this threat and that you would move rapidly to secure and destroy them as one of the most immediate objectives of the war.

Today, over a year after the beginning of military operations, the U.S. Iraq Survey Group that you sent in to replace the UN weapons inspectors has failed to find any significant evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Congress has provided close to a billion dollars for the Department of Defense's search team and on top of the lack of success, it has been reported that some staff from the Survey Group has been assigned at times to other missions.

Given the startling information uncovered by the IAEA and the emphasis you placed on the IAEA in your recent nonproliferation speech at the National Defense University on February 11, we urge you to give the United Nations weapons inspectors a greater role in the search for Iraqi WMD.

We believe that inviting them to supplement the efforts of the Survey Group would both add credibility to the final results of the search and add experience to the US team. It would also help coordinate a greater international response to help track down and control material that may be proliferating out of Iraq. Furthermore, given the degraded security situation in Iraq, it would help if we could share some more tasks with foreign partners who are willing to accept some of the risks.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Ellen O. Tauscher

George Miller

Jim McDermott

Sam Farr

William Delahunt

Barbara Lee

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May 12, 2004

The Honorable Donald Rumsfeld
Secretary of Defense
Room 3E880
The Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Rumsfeld:

I write to ask that you act swiftly to assure that civilian contractors who have been implicated in the Abu Ghraib prison abuse scandal are brought to justice. It seems like there is some confusion as to whether the Department of Defense (DoD) or Department of Justice (DOJ) holds responsibility for punishing contractors who are not directly contracted by the DoD, but have committed crimes in Iraq while working with the Armed Forces. Your department must either move forward to investigate and prosecute civilian contractors who may have abused or ordered the abuse of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib, or expeditiously refer their cases to DOJ to resolve ambiguity about which department in the executive branch has prosecutorial authority in this area.

In your testimony last week before the Senate Armed Services Committee you noted, "Certainly anyone who recommended the kind of behavior that I've seen depicted in those photos [depicting the abuse of Iraqi prisoners] needs to be brought to justice." As you documented for the House and Senate Armed Services Committees last week, the DoD has already launched an investigation into the involvement of U.S. military personnel in the atrocities at Abu Ghraib. Several service members have been arrested, and the first court-martial proceedings will commence in the coming weeks.

However, according to General Antonio Tugaba's recently leaked report, at least one individual who is *not* a member of the U.S. military may have "recommended" or even ordered these heinous acts. Gen. Taguba found that U.S. civilian contract interrogator Steven Stephanowicz

"Allowed and/or instructed MPs, who were not trained in interrogation techniques, to facilitate interrogations by "setting conditions" which were neither authorized and in accordance with applicable

regulations/policy. He clearly knew his instructions equated to physical abuse."

I fear that Mr. Stephanowicz and other civilian contractors implicated in the abuse scandal may never face trial or punishment for their grave crimes because of uncertainty surrounding the legal status of civilian contractors working in Iraq.

In a letter to Sen. Patrick Leahy dated May 7, 2004, Assistant Attorney General William Moschella said, "DOJ was not currently involved in investigations of civilian contractors over whom we would have jurisdiction under MEJA [the Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act]...such investigations are being conducted by DoD, and ...DOJ has not yet received a referral from DoD pertaining to this matter."

However, that same day the Washington Post reported that Attorney General John D. Ashcroft had indicated that "killings or abuse of military detainees in Iraq that involved civilian contractors could be prosecuted by the Justice Department." If your Department has already determined that reprimanding those private contractors named in the Taguba report and others who worked at Abu Ghraib falls outside your authority, I urge you to immediately refer their cases to the DOJ.

The credibility of the United States government and our military depends on our ability to respond to this situation swiftly and effectively. I ask that you report back to Congress as soon as you make a final decision on this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Marty Meehan, M.C.

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5TH DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS
<http://www.house.gov/meehan/>
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House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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April 6, 2004

Dear Colleague:

As we look back on the one year anniversary of the invasion of Iraq, we must redouble our efforts to ensure that our troops receive the protection and equipment they need. For too long, our troops have patrolled the streets of Iraq and Afghanistan in unarmored vehicles, falling prey to enemy fire, improvised bombs, and shrapnel.

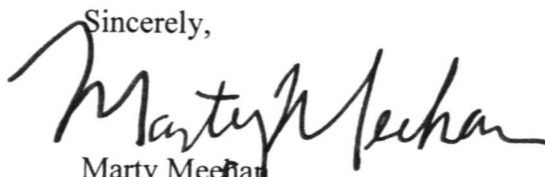
The Defense Department estimates that more than 12,800 armored HMMWVs are needed to support Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, but only one third of these vehicles are equipped with reinforced windows and doors. At current production rates, it will take until at least the Fall of 2004 to uparmor HMMWVs or install add-on armor kits.

While I am encouraged that Acting Army Secretary Les Brownlee recently announced that the Army will ramp up production of uparmored humvees from 220 per month to 450 per month beginning in May, no new orders have been placed. I am also concerned that the Army has failed to adequately embrace alternative technologies such as add-on armor kits, which offer a quick, less costly solution to uparmoring vehicles. Every day that we continue to allow our troops to ride around in unprotected vehicles is a day we put a soldier's life at risk.

That's why I have introduced House Concurrent Resolution 391, which calls on the Defense Department to release all appropriated funds and use all production sources possible to armor these HMMWVs as expeditiously possible. I hope that you will join me in supporting this resolution.

To become a cosponsor, please contact Lauren Briggerman in Congressman Meehan's office at 225-0700 or lauren.briggerman@mail.house.gov. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,


Marty Meehan
Member of Congress

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 21, 2003

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We are concerned that our Armed Forces are over-extended and that we are relying too heavily upon members of the Guard and Reserve in the continuing war on terrorism.

You will be making decisions over the coming months that will be reflected in your FY05 budget request to the Congress. We believe that we must significantly increase the number of people on active duty in the military and revise the missions given to the National Guard and Reserve during the up-coming budget year. We encourage you to incorporate proposals to address these challenges in your budget. Making these changes would be met with broad, bipartisan support in the Congress.

The operational tempo required to maintain forward-deployed forces in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, Korea, and elsewhere is unprecedented. Not since the Vietnam War has the U.S. Army had such a large fraction of its active-duty forces deployed.

While we understand that the administration will seek to reduce U.S. forces in Iraq as Iraqi security forces are trained, we must expect that the Iraq deployment will continue at substantial levels for a considerable time. Moreover, the war on terrorism is not a crisis for which the military can surge and then recover. This will be a lengthy war that will define entire careers. We must size and structure our forces to prevail over the long haul.

We are also concerned about the mix of Active, Reserve and Guard units needed to sustain the war on terrorism. We are asking more from our reservist citizen-soldiers than ever before. While they have served admirably, we believe that we need to review and adjust the missions and specialties in the reserve components so that we can protect the homeland and prevail against terrorists without over-reliance on citizen soldiers for long periods of time.

The men and women of our Guard and Reserve can and should be called upon to assist our country in times of crisis on a temporary basis. Many of the units currently serving in Iraq will have served for nearly 15 months, in some cases longer, by the time their tours are finished. When they come home, the nature of this war is such that they know they are quite likely to be called up again sometime in the near future.

Mr. President, every day we read stories about the potential impending loss we could suffer to our Guard and Reserve forces if the current situation is not fixed. The Army Guard is not going to meet its recruitment targets this year. Many of us have served, currently serve or have family and personal friends that serve in the Guard and Reserve. All of us have constituents who serve. Unless these burdens are reduced we may find ourselves in the midst of a recruiting and retention crisis in the reserve components. We need to send a clear message in the coming budget to members of the Guard and Reserve that help is on the way.

Repeated, long-term deployments will clearly take a toll on spouses and children of our men and women in the military here at home. Military service always entails time away from home, but we think that the active services – and particularly the Army – must find a way to better balance the demands of overseas deployments with the needs of troops' families back home. Otherwise, we may face a mid-grade retention problem in the coming years that will be devastating to our forces.

We are particularly concerned about the size of the active duty Army. While we will certainly work with you and your administration, we feel that your budget should include a build up to two more combat divisions so that we can reduce the pressure on the reserve components and sustain the war on terrorism for the long term without losing expertise that will "hollow-out" the Army.

The size of the current Army—and the Army budgets that pay for it—are predicated upon an early-1990s strategy that did not foresee the tempo of today's operations or the long-term war on global terrorism. During the decade of the 1990s, the Army shrank from 18 divisions to 10. The Cold War was over and the war on terrorism had not yet begun. We must now make the decisions needed to structure our forces so that we prevail in this new war that is likely to continue for some time. Increasing the size of the force is no panacea for meeting all of the challenges we face, but we believe it is a critical element of any plan to address the needs of our nation's security.

Mr. President, our military needs help now. We ask that you show strong leadership and take the necessary steps to increase the end strength of our Armed Forces and adjust the mix of active and reserve component forces in the upcoming budget year.

We stand with you ready to confront any and all challenges to our great nation.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan, Susan Davis, Jo Ann Davis, Joe Wilson, Gene Taylor, Candice S. Miller, Ciro Rodriguez, Robert E. Andrews, Tom Osborne, Ralph M. Hall, Robin Hayes, Mike Roger, Lane Evans, Phil English, Gene Green, Jim Langevin, Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, Max Burn, Judy Biggert, Nathan Deal, William L. Jenkins, Greg Walden, Wayne Gilchrest, Randy "Duke" Cunningham, Stevan Pearce, Bob Beauprez, Donald Manzullo, Ed Whitfield, Tom Cole, Tim Murphey, James Moran, Jeb Bradley, Wally Herger, Lee Terry, Ellen O. Tauscher, John B. Larson, Adam Schiff, Tom Lantos, Steve Israel, John M. Spratt, Jr., John Kline, Rob Simmons, Loretta Sanchez, Madeline, Neil Abercrombie, Walter B. Jones, Gil Gutknecht, Joel Hefley, Shelley Moore Capito, Ken Calvert, John Sullivan, Ron Lewis, John Hostettler, Jim Gibbons, Jim Ryun, Kay Granger, John P. Murtha, John M. McHugh, Chet Edwards, David Scott, Marcy Kaptur, Dennis Cardoza, Kevin Brady

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 4, 2003

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman
House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hunter:

We are writing to request that the Armed Services Committee hold a hearing to investigate the many reports from soldiers in the field and numerous news accounts of American men and women fighting in Iraq without adequate lifesaving body armor—an indication that our preparation for this war was inadequate.

We have learned from soldiers serving in Iraq that only some troops are being issued the highest quality “Interceptor” body armor—Kevlar bulletproof vests with removable ceramic inserts—and that fellow soldiers are being killed when their Vietnam-era “flak jackets” fail to stop enemy bullets.

We have also learned from news reports that mothers and fathers of U.S. servicemen and women are actually purchasing ceramic plates for these Interceptor vests and sending them to their sons and daughters in Iraq. These news accounts further report that those who have neither the Interceptor jackets nor the ceramic inserts are having the ceramic inserts sent to them, and they are using duct tape to attach them to the backs of their flak jackets. This is an embarrassment to the government that sent these soldiers into combat and the agency responsible for adequately equipping them.

Also disconcerting are the news reports that indicate that the Administration, in an effort to win allies in this conflict, has pledged to give some foreign troops body armor while American troops are going without. Specifically, the BBC on September 19, 2003, quoted a Polish National Defense Ministry spokesman saying, “Since the risk factor in Iraq is high, there is a need to protect soldiers with high quality equipment. We agreed that the Americans would supply for free the latest version of 8,800 bullet-proof jackets for the multinational division, including 3,700 for the Polish contingent.”

Those of us who have been raising this issue found little comfort when Army Gen. John Abizaid, in a statement at a congressional hearing regarding the Iraq supplemental, told members, “I can’t answer for the record why we started this war with protective vests that were in short supply.” We find Army Gen. John Abizaid’s response unacceptable. We believe for many reasons, including the safety of our troops currently deployed as well as the safety of troops in future conflicts, that this question should be answered. Congress deserves to understand why the Department of Defense, clearly knowing it was preparing for war in Iraq far in advance of combat operations, failed to provide U.S. soldiers with adequate lifesaving armor prior to the start of combat operations.

We believe Congress has the right to know the following:

- What failures allowed for our soldiers to be deployed to battle without having state of the art body armor? Were there procurement difficulties? Was there a lapse in logistical planning?
- How many soldiers have been injured or killed in combat because they were not wearing state of the art body armor?

- What is the Administration's target date for ensuring that every U.S. serviceperson in Iraq will be equipped with state of the art vests?
- Will the administration ensure that all U.S. troops—including National Guard and Reserve soldiers—receive such vests before our nation gives them away to foreign troops?

Unfortunately, this shortage of body armor is illustrative of a larger lapse in military readiness that includes the failure to equip our military vehicles with protective armor and to provide our troops with available portable jammers that block radio signals used to detonate remote controlled bombs. We believe Congress has the responsibility to immediately investigate the body armor issue and more broadly review the status of our military readiness to ensure the Administration no longer neglects to equip our soldiers during this war or those fighting in any future conflict. Therefore, we respectfully request that the Armed Services Committee hold a hearing on what contributed to the current shortage of protective body armor, the most efficient and timely manner in which to equip our deployed troops with this armor, the factors that contributed to this lapse in military readiness, and whether or not larger issues of readiness warrant immediate action.

We thank you for your time and attention and stand ready to work with you on this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan	Bob Etheridge	Gene Green
Ted Strickland	Jerrold Nadler	Sander Levin
Charles B. Rangel	Lois Capps	Jose E. Serrano
James L. Oberstar	Lynn Woolsey	Nancy Pelosi
Sherrod Brown	Ron Kind	Joseph Hoeffel
Charles Stenholm	Rosa L. DeLauro	Chris Van Hollen
Tim Holden	David Scott	Linda T. Sanchez
Chet Edwards	Barbara Lee	David R. Obey
Henry A. Waxman	Silvestre Reyes	Jane Harman
Edward J. Markey	Diana DeGette	Loretta Sanchez
James P. McGovern	Karen McCarthy	Zoe Lofgren
James R. Langevin	Raul M Grijalva	Marcy Kaptur
Nita Lowey	Sam Farr	Thomas H. Allen
Brian Baird	Marion Berry	Lane Evans
Janice Shakowsky	Tim Ryan	Mark Udall
Major R. Owens	Lucille Roybald-Allard	Hilda L. Solis
Eliot L. Engel	Bernard Sanders	Ellen Tauscher
Robert A. Brady	Shelly Berkley	Fortney Pete Stark
John Lewis	John Lewis	Robert Wexler
C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger	Mike McIntyre	Diane E. Watson
Gary L. Ackerman	Lloyd Doggett	Bob Filner
Dennis J. Kucinich	Allen Boyd	Darlene Hooley
Tom Udall	Betty McCollum	Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Robert Kennedy	Rahm Emanuel	Ed Pastor
Joe Baca	Julia Carson	Maxine Waters
Anna G. Eshoo	Jim Cooper	Carolyn B. Maloney
John W. Olver	Michael H. Michaud	George Miller
Michael E. Capuano	Bart Stupak	Ed Case
Corrine Brown	Tommy Baldwin	Dale E. Kildee
Daniel Lipinski	Jim McDermott	Earl Pomeroy
		Neil Abercrombie

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 27, 2003

The Honorable Bill Young
Member of Congress
2407 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Young:

We write this letter as advocates for our Nation's men and women deployed in the Global War on Terrorism and to ensure that the Conference Report include sufficient funding to make certain that our servicemembers' basic and security needs are met.

It is unacceptable that tens of thousands of our troops were sent out to battle without proper body armor. The United States has 44,000 soldiers in Iraq without body armor. Congress owes it to the young men and women in uniform to be advocates on their behalf and to make certain that they have the items necessary to conduct their jobs safely and quickly. Our deployed servicemembers need to be issued Interceptor vests (that include removable ceramic plates in the front capable of stopping 7.62-millimeter rounds fired by the Kalashnikov rifle (or the equivalent)). They should not be relying on Vietnam-era flak jackets that make them vulnerable to even small weapons fire.

It is also important that we ensure that our servicemembers fully meet immunization and other pre-deployment requirements. Based on GAO review of deployments from four installations, between 14 and 46 percent of servicemembers were missing at least one of their required immunizations prior to deployment. As many as 36 percent of the servicemembers were missing two or more of their required immunizations, such as influenza and hepatitis. The United States cannot send its servicemembers to war without first making certain that they are protected from in-theater disease threats. Public law 105-85 states that the Department of Defense is required to establish a system to assess the medical condition of servicemembers before and after deployment. As a result, DoD implemented specific force health protections and surveillance policies. Part of these policies was to ensure that servicemembers receive vaccinations.

It is an outrage that servicemembers, deployed in the Global War on Terrorism, do not receive adequate personal hygiene products and drinking water. Servicemembers have told us that they lack personal items like razors, shaving cream, toothpaste, etc. Congress needs to provide these items to America's soldiers and not rely on families to continually send their loved ones these necessities. The U.S. is working to provide drinking water to Iraqis—it needs to be doing even better for its own servicemembers.

Additionally, some of our servicemembers have been deployed in Afghanistan and Iraq for such a long time that their gear, clothing and footwear need to be replaced. Congress needs to make certain that basic clothing necessities like t-shirts, socks and desert camouflage uniforms are being provided to the troops.

In conclusion, we ask that you provide funding sufficient for furnishing, to all United States Armed Forces deployed in the Global War on Terrorism, the following items:

1. Interceptor vests;
2. Chemical suits;
3. Pre-deployment vaccinations;
4. Basic personal hygiene products;
5. Drinking water;
6. Individual replacement gear, clothing and footwear.

We thank you for consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan
Corrine Brown
Marcy Kaptur

Gene Taylor
Bobby L. Rush
John Conyers Jr.

DUNCAN HUNTER, CALIFORNIA, CHAIRMAN
 CURT WELDON, PENNSYLVANIA
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 JEFF MILLER, FLORIDA
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 TOM COLE, OKLAHOMA
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 PHIL GINGREY, GEORGIA
 MIKE ROGERS, ALABAMA
 TRENT FRANKS, ARIZONA

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515-6035

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

October 17, 2003

JOHN SPRATT, SOUTH CAROLINA
 SOLOMON P. ORTIZ, TEXAS
 LANE EVANS, ILLINOIS
 GENE TAYLOR, MISSISSIPPI
 NEIL ABERCROMBIE, HAWAII
 MARTY MEEHAN, MASSACHUSETTS
 SILVESTRE REYES, TEXAS
 VIC SNYDER, ARKANSAS
 JIM TURNER, TEXAS
 ADAM SMITH, WASHINGTON
 LORETTA SANCHEZ, CALIFORNIA
 MIKE MCINTYRE, NORTH CAROLINA
 CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ, TEXAS
 ELLEN O. TAUSCHER, CALIFORNIA
 ROBERT A. BRADY, PENNSYLVANIA
 BARON P. HILL, INDIANA
 JOHN B. LARSON, CONNECTICUT
 SUSAN A. DAVIS, CALIFORNIA
 JAMES R. LANGEVIN, RHODE ISLAND
 STEVE ISRAEL, NEW YORK
 RICK LARSEN, WASHINGTON
 JIM COOPER, TENNESSEE
 JIM MARSHALL, GEORGIA
 KENDRICK B. MECK, FLORIDA
 MADELINE Z. BORDALLO, GUAM
 RODNEY ALEXANDER, LOUISIANA
 TIM RYAN, OHIO

ROBERT S. RANGEL, STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
 Chairman
 Committee on Armed Services
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We write to convey to you in the strongest possible terms our objection to the paucity of meaningful full committee hearings related to American policy in Iraq. Moreover, we request that the committee immediately undertake a series of substantive, in-depth and open hearings on this topic that include testimony from a range of outside experts, as well as Administration and military witnesses.

The Armed Services Committee has a long tradition of substantive engagement on defense issues of the day. Regrettably, the committee is failing to uphold this tradition now as it pertains to the war in Iraq.

Over the past several weeks, myriad proposals have been made to you or your staff for Iraq-related hearings. It has been suggested that the committee hold hearings on Iraq reconstruction and stability operations, on a view from the field, in which service members of varying ranks would testify, on the personnel policy implications of Iraq deployments—especially those pertaining to our National Guard and Reserve forces, on our military's ability to sustain our global commitments in light of our involvement in Iraq, on the implications beyond Iraq of U.S. preemption policy, and even on U.S. security and stability operations in Afghanistan. We have suggested testimony from witnesses from inside and outside the executive branch who have performed meaningful analysis or bring a useful perspective to these issues.

We have sought witnesses from the GAO, CBO, the Rand Corporation, from current and retired general officers, from think tanks, and from military coalition organizations. Despite these requests, only one nongovernmental witness has testified concerning Iraq—Dr. John Hamre—and he was testifying because of the report he wrote

at the request of the Secretary of Defense. Just this week, Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz declined to produce three general officer witnesses who would have testified about how our forces won the war—a good news story for the Administration—ostensibly because their testimony might jeopardize their careers! We share your frustration at the cancellation of this hearing for such spurious reasons.

The Armed Services Committee has a constitutional duty to oversee the Department of Defense and its operations and policies. The committee has an institutional duty to the House of Representatives to perform this role. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we have a duty to the public, especially our constituents, to bring into the open the facts and circumstances surrounding the tremendously important issues related to the situation in Iraq. Policies that involve the lives of American soldiers, tens of billions of dollars, and the future of the Middle East and of America's global leadership could not be more critical. Only if we meet these responsibilities can we enact wise policies for the governance of our military and for our country.

Our purpose in writing to you is not to create venues by which to publicly criticize the Administration, although some criticism is perhaps inevitable. Rather, we all have a duty to explore what is going both right and wrong in Iraq. We diminish the role and standing of the Armed Services Committee and are derelict in our duties if we do not have more robust and complete hearings than we have had thus far. A continuing parade of high-level political appointee witnesses and closed briefings from the Administration is not sufficient and will not enable us to adequately fulfill our duties.

Mr. Chairman, the Armed Services Committee is a great institution. We hate to see its role and relevance decline by the failure to do what it was created to do—exercise oversight of the Department. At some point, the interests of the committee should supercede those of supporting the coordinate branch of government and Administration policy, and we believe we are already past that point. We thank you for the hearings you have held to this point, including the hearing with John Hamre last week. But we again urge you to convene more robust and complete hearings on Iraq than we have had so far. The failure to do so will leave us no choice but to consider other options for exploring these important issues.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter, and we look forward to your reply in the near future.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Ike Skelton
John M. Spratt Jr.
Gene Taylor
Solomon P. Ortiz
Neil Abercrombie
Richard Larsen
Jim Cooper
Ciro Rodriguez
Baron Hill

Kendrick B. Meek
Ellen Tauscher
John B. Larson
Madeline Z. Bordallo
Tim Ryan
Steve Israel
James R. Langevin
Lane Evans
Rodney Alexander
Mike McIntyre

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 1, 2003

General Richard B. Myers
Chairman
Joint Chiefs of Staff
The Pentagon
Washington, DC 20318-9999

Dear General Myers:

We are writing as members of the House Armed Services Committee to formally request that Congress immediately be furnished a copy of the report prepared by the Joint Staff entitled "Operation Iraqi Freedom Strategic Lessons Learned."

On September 3, 2003, The Washington Times reported not only the existence of this document, but that they possess a copy of this supposedly "secret" report. Obviously we are concerned about how a newspaper can obtain a classified report. We are further troubled that the report has not even been made available to the Congress.

Although the specific document requested may still be in draft form, according to the Times article, the report in their possession is labeled "final draft" and was prepared at least two months ago. You have given assurances that a complete report may be forthcoming "at a later date." We strongly believe, however, that a current report will be of substantial benefit to Members of Congress now regardless of its level of completion. It is imperative that you provide any information you can immediately. That information will be crucial to the Congress in our efforts to more fully understand the environment in Iraq. It will also weigh heavily in our consideration of the Administration's supplemental appropriations and budgetary requests.

We look forward to working with you to successfully achieve our goals in Iraq. Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,
Marty Meehan
Gene Taylor
Lane Evans
Neil Abercrombie
John Spratt
Marty Meehan
Ciro Rodrigues
Loretta Sanchez
Susan Davis
John B. Larson
Robert A. Brady
Adam Smith

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 9, 2003

The Honorable Duncan Hunter
Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
2120 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Hunter and Ranking Member Skelton,

We are writing to request that the Armed Services Committee immediately conduct a series of open hearings on the situation in Iraq and its impact on our armed forces. We are concerned that events on the ground are moving too quickly to delay these hearings any longer. By any measure, combat operations in Iraq continue. The President's overtures to the United Nations and his announcement that he will seek \$87 billion in additional funds for operations in Iraq clearly demonstrate that the situation in Iraq is significantly different from pre-war assessments. The ongoing violence and dramatic changes in course by the United States in Iraq demand closer review by Congress.

We support our troops and are committed to giving them whatever they need to accomplish their mission, but we have many concerns about the situation on the ground in Iraq. Continuing operations in Iraq will have a significant impact on the health of our armed forces and the success of the larger global fight against terrorism. We are concerned that the military forces now in place may be insufficient or inappropriate for the mission being undertaken. Heavy reliance on reserve component troops creates many serious concerns about the future of our reserve forces. The size of the U.S. presence in Iraq also raises many long-term questions about the adequacy of our force structure, particularly in the U.S. Army. We are also troubled by reports from the field indicating that equipment shortages, a lack of repair parts, and extremely poor living conditions continue to plague our forces months after the supposed end of major combat operations.

Before giving the President another \$87 billion to prosecute the war and reconstruct Iraq, Congress must know more about how the money will be spent, how these concerns will be addressed, and what the specific plan is for achieving U.S. objectives in Iraq. We need a specific plan because the steady stream of wounded and killed raises many concerns about the deteriorating security situation in some parts of the country. The ongoing security crisis will hinder efforts to broaden international support for Iraq's reconstruction and may delay the handover of real authority to the Iraqi people.

We feel strongly that these and many other questions require extensive investigation by the Armed Services Committee. We appreciate the periodic briefings on the situation in Iraq that you have sponsored to date, but we need real hearings with key administration and military leaders to fully examine the many issues affecting U.S. Armed Forces in Iraq.

We urge you in the strongest possible terms to call for a series of open hearings on Iraq as soon as possible. We owe it to our troops in the field and our constituents to explore these issues now.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan
Jim Cooper
John Spratt
Neil Abercrombie
Vic Snyder

Rick Larsen
Lane Evans
Tim Ryan
Steve Israel
Baron P. Hill

Loretta Sanchez
James R. Langevin
Adam Smith
Silvestra Reyes

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 15, 2003

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

We are writing to you to request further information about the intelligence regarding Iraq's alleged recent interest in acquiring uranium from the country of Niger.

In your State of the Union address you suggested that Iraq posed an imminent nuclear danger to our nation's security interests in part because it was in the process of reconstituting its nuclear weapons program. In your address, you stated that, "*The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.*" In recent days, Administration officials have defended this statement as "technically accurate" and argued that the British government has stood by its conclusion -- based on intelligence information that has not been fully disclosed to the United States. Press reports have suggested that such intelligence may relate to possible efforts by Iraq to obtain uranium from Somalia or the Congo, in addition to any efforts to obtain uranium from Niger. Press reports further indicate that the British have withheld some of this intelligence information at the request of another foreign government, which some reports have suggested may be France.

We note that you will be meeting with British Prime Minister Tony Blair this week. We believe that this meeting affords you an opportunity to formally ask the British Government to fully disclose to the U.S. all of the intelligence information upon which they have based their findings and conclusions regarding alleged Iraqi efforts to obtain uranium from Africa.

In light of the long-standing special relationship between the United States and Great Britain, we believe that you should ask Mr. Blair, if necessary, to contact whatever foreign government provided the British with the intelligence information in question and obtain their agreement to releasing this information the U.S., so that Congress and the American public can be made aware of the full nature and veracity of the intelligence information that formed the basis for U.S.-British military action in Iraq.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan
Bill Pascrell Jr.
Edward J. Markey
Joe Hoeffel
Fortney Pete Stark
Steve Israel
Karen McCarthy

Barbara Lee
Henry A. Waxman
Neil Abercrombie
Shelly Berkley
Corrine Brown
Tom Udall
Lynn C. Woolsey

Ellen O'Tauscher
Tammy Baldwin
Steven R. Rothman
Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Lloyd Doggett
Robert Wexler
Diane E. Watson
Shelia Jackson-Lee
John Lewis
Bobby Rush
Sanford D. Bishop Jr.
Jim McDermott
Grace F. Napolitano
Raul M. Grijalva
John W. Olver
Gene Taylor
Frank Pallone Jr.
Michael H. Michaud
Mike Honda
Diana DeGette
Sam Farr

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 10, 2003

The Honorable George W. Bush
President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

We are writing in reference to your recent acknowledgement that the claim you made in your State of the Union address regarding Iraqi efforts to obtain uranium for nuclear weapons from Africa was based on false information.

On October 10, 2002, we voted for H. J. Res. 114, which authorized you to use U.S. military force if necessary to address Iraq's failure to comply with its disarmament obligations and any imminent threat posed by this failure. H.R. Res. 114 provided, in part, that before you could exercise the authority set forth in the resolution, you first had to make a determination that "reliance by the United States on further diplomatic or other peaceful means alone either (A) will not adequately protect the national security of the United States against the continuing threat posed by Iraq or (B) is not likely to lead to enforcement of all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq."

We voted for this resolution in order to give you the leverage that your Administration said it needed to convince the United Nations Security Council to pass a tough resolution providing for on-demand, anywhere-anytime inspections of all of Iraq's suspected nuclear, chemical, biological, and missile sites. On October 16, 2002, you signed H.J. Res. 114 into law (Public Law 107-243). On November 8, 2002, the Security Council then passed Resolution 1441, which provided for such inspections. As a result, by early this year the UN and the International Atomic Energy Agency had assembled inspection teams in Iraq and had begun the process of trying to fully account for all of Iraq's suspected weapons of mass destruction.

Early this year, your Administration initiated U.S. military action to topple the Saddam Hussein regime and forcibly disarm Iraq. In so doing, the Administration cited the intelligence information gathered by the U.S. and allied governments to support the proposition that Iraq was continuing to hide evidence of its weapons of mass destruction programs.

During your State of the Union address, you told Congress and the American people that:

"The International Atomic Energy Agency confirmed in the 1990s that Saddam Hussein had an advanced nuclear weapons development program, had a design for a nuclear weapon and was working on five different methods of enriching uranium for a bomb. *The British government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa.* Our intelligence sources tell us that he has attempted to purchase high-strength aluminum tubes suitable for nuclear weapons production. Saddam Hussein has not credibly explained these activities. He clearly has much to hide (emphasis added)."

Press reports indicate that your Administration has now acknowledged that the claim that Iraq had recently sought to obtain significant quantities of uranium from Africa was erroneous and was based upon forged documents and already had been discredited by U.S. experts.

This acknowledgement is welcome, but it brings into even sharper focus disturbing and serious questions about the credibility of the information your Administration presented to the Congress and the American public about the nature and scope of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programs in the months leading up to the initiation of U.S. military operations in Iraq.

Your Administration's recent acknowledgement that at least part of this intelligence was based on faulty and forged information calls into question the claims made regarding the imminence of the security threat posed by Iraqi efforts to obtain prohibited weapons. We would therefore respectfully request that you provide us with responses to the following questions:

1. Exactly how did the claim regarding Iraqi efforts to obtain uranium from Africa get into your State of the Union Speech, in light of the evidence in the possession of the Executive Branch that this claim was based on forged documents?
2. Who within the Executive Branch reviewed and approved the inclusion of this statement in your speech?
3. Did anyone raise concerns about its inclusion? If not, why not? If so, why were such concerns apparently disregarded?
4. Ambassador Joseph Wilson, who was dispatched to Niger to investigate the intelligence reports about a putative Iraqi-Niger uranium connection, stated in an interview on NBC, that his doubts about the purported Iraq-Niger connection reached the highest levels of government, including Vice President Dick Cheney's office. In fact, he said, Cheney's office inquired about the purported Niger-Iraq link. "The question was asked of the CIA by the Office of the Vice President. The Office of the Vice President, I am absolutely convinced, received a very specific response to the question it asked, and that response was based upon my trip out there," Wilson said. What input did the Vice President's office have into your State of the Union speech? Did the Vice President's office receive one or more drafts of the speech prior to its delivery, and if so, when?
5. One week after your State of the Union address, Secretary of State Colin Powell appeared before the UN Security Council to discuss the status of inspections in Iraq and describe U.S. intelligence information regarding Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction. The Secretary did not cite the claim about Iraqi attempts to obtain uranium from Africa in the UN speech. This suggests that some time after your State of the Union Address, the U.S. Government decided against citing alleged Iraqi attempts to obtain

uranium from Africa in the Security Council. Yet there was no public acknowledgement by any one in a leadership position in the Administration that earlier claims about this were based on erroneous information until after Ambassador Wilson wrote an article in the New York Times laying out the facts and circumstances surrounding this matter.

Why didn't you or your Administration correct the public record earlier?

6. In light of the revelations regarding this claim, what reassurance can Congress and the American public receive that the other claims you made in your State of the Union speech regarding Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programs are based on solid intelligence information and analysis? In your response, please address the following issues:

- a. During your State of the Union address you stated:

“Our intelligence officials estimate that Saddam Hussein had the materials to produce as much as 500 tons of sarin, mustard and VX nerve agent. In such quantities, these chemical agents could also kill untold thousands. He's not accounted for these materials. He has given no evidence that he has destroyed them.”

Where are the 500 tons of sarin, mustard, and VX nerve agent you discussed?

Was the intelligence information upon which this statement was based erroneous?

- b. During your State of the Union address you stated:

“U.S. intelligence indicates that Saddam Hussein had upwards of 30,000 munitions capable of delivering chemical agents. Inspectors recently turned up 16 of them -- despite Iraq's recent declaration denying their existence. Saddam Hussein has not accounted for the remaining 29,984 of these prohibited munitions. He's given no evidence that he has destroyed them. “

Where are the remaining 29,984 chemical weapons-capable munitions?

Was the intelligence information upon which this statement was based also erroneous?

- c. During your State of the Union address you stated:

“From three Iraqi defectors we know that Iraq, in the late 1990s, had several mobile biological weapons labs. These are designed to produce germ warfare agents, and can be moved from place to a place to evade

inspectors. Saddam Hussein has not disclosed these facilities. He's given no evidence that he has destroyed them."

Where are the several mobile biological weapons labs? We are aware of press reports of the discovery of one vehicle that some within the Administration claimed to represent one such lab, but we are also aware from press reports that some within the intelligence community do not believe the evidence supports such a conclusion. In any event, the several mobile labs mentioned in your speech do not appear to have been found, nor has definitive evidence linked the one vehicle that has been found to biological weapons production. Was the intelligence information upon which this statement was based also erroneous?

Mr. President, we know that you share our concern about the potential damage that the revelations regarding the false uranium information has done and is doing to U.S. nonproliferation efforts around the world. As a direct result of concerns over manipulation or exaggeration of intelligence information regarding weapons of mass destruction, there is a danger that nations around the world may lose confidence that they can rely on the United States for straight information on the growing risk of nonproliferation. Without the credible leadership of the U.S. in combating the spread of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, this effort becomes a dangerous muddle, rife for exploitation by proliferators.

We therefore respectfully request that you provide us with a clarification of the matters we have raised, so that we can better understand how the statement about the alleged Iraqi efforts to obtain African uranium came to be made, and receive some reassurance that the Administration's other statements regarding alleged Iraqi weapons of mass destruction programs rests on a strong evidentiary basis.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Edward J. Markey
Patrick J. Kennedy
Sanford Bishop, Jr.
Ellen O. Tauscher

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2003

President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As we move toward victory in our military engagement with Saddam Hussein's regime, we must begin to implement plans for post-war Iraq. The entire world has an interest in Iraq's future success and the participation of a wide and diverse group of countries can benefit Iraq's rebuilding efforts.

We stand behind your statement entitled "*A Vision for Iraq and the Iraqi People*" released on March 16, 2003 during the summit in the Azores Islands, to "...support an international reconstruction program to help Iraq achieve real prosperity and reintegrate into the global community," and "...to work in close partnership with international institutions, including the United Nations; our Allies and partners; and bilateral donors" in achieving this vision. We also support your agreement to urgently pursue "...new United Nations Security Council resolutions that would affirm Iraq's territorial integrity, ensure rapid delivery of humanitarian relief, and endorse an appropriate post-conflict administration for Iraq."

We agree that seeking prompt UN action in support of these goals will benefit the people of Iraq and support coalition forces in the immediate provision of humanitarian assistance. Further, UN involvement in post-war Iraq will help add international legitimacy and needed stability to a new, representative Iraqi government.

Recent actions by members of the international community indicate a strong desire to contribute to a post-conflict environment where Iraqis can live in freedom and prosper under democratic governance. As you know, at least some of the top leaders in the European Union are sincerely looking past heated divisions regarding the use of military action against Iraq, and are supportive of assisting the people of Iraq through the UN by humanitarian relief and through a reconstruction program. We believe there is now an opportunity for the United States to shape the UN role for delivery of such assistance in post-war Iraq and to effectively work toward consensus in the region and throughout the world.

Engaging the UN at this time is also an opportunity to bridge rifts in our international relationships while following through on our commitment to bring liberty and prosperity to the Iraqi people. Further, this action will serve to strengthen our ties with our allies as we continue in the war against international terrorism.

We thank you for your current efforts toward ensuring that the immediate needs of the Iraqi people are met, and we encourage your leadership in support of an international

reconstruction program to help Iraq achieve democracy, prosperity and reintegrate into the global community.

Sincerely,

Marty Meehan

Ron Kind
Steny Hoyer
Howard Berman
Michael Castle
Jim Davis
Jane Harman
Vernon Ehlers
Jim Kolbe
John Spratt
Jim Leach
Adam Smith
Cal Dooley
Anne Honclion
Carolyn Maloney
Charlie Stenholm
Carolyn McCarthy
Gene Green
Collin Peterson
Wayne Gilchrest
Tim Holden
Michael McNulty
Steve Israel
Earl Pomeroy
John Tanner
Stephen Lynch
Robert Wexler

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 24, 2003

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

On November 8, 2002, the United Nations Security Council unanimously endorsed a resolution designed to force Iraq to give up any weapons of mass destruction. We believe the U.S. should make every attempt to achieve Iraq's disarmament through diplomatic means and with the full support of our allies, in accordance with the process articulated in UN Security Council resolution 1441.

The UN resolution calls for a tough new weapons inspection regime; it requires the government of Iraq to provide inspectors with immediate, unimpeded, unconditional, and unrestricted access, and requires that Iraq permit inspectors to interview officials, scientists, and other individuals as necessary to fulfill the mandate of the resolution. This is an inherently difficult task, requiring patience and perseverance.

The report scheduled to be given by Chief UN weapons inspector Dr. Hans Blix and Director General Mohamed ElBaradei on January 27, 2003 will assess whether the United Nations Monitoring, Verification, and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) comprehensive mission is proceeding in the unobstructed and effective manner necessary to realize the aims of UN Security Council resolution 1441. We encourage your Administration to sufficiently weigh future decisions regarding Iraq on the assessment given by UNMOVIC/IAEA, including additional inspection time and resources as appropriate. Your commitment to working through the UN Security Council and your vocal support for resolution 1441 are critical to UNMOVIC/IAEA's eventual success.

In addition, we respectfully urge you to use the opportunity provided in the upcoming State of the Union Address to offer assurances both to the American people and the international community that the United States remains committed to the diplomatic approach and comprehensive inspections process agreed to in UN Security Council resolution 1441.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to your response

Signed By:

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